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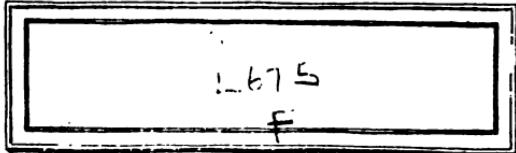


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FAGOTS

LILLIAN F. LEWIS

YB 76397





FAGOTS

BY

LILLIAN F. LEWIS



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FOREWORD

A bundle of fagots here,
To offer you fireside cheer:
Mere twigs, it is true, but still
They'll blaze, if it be your will;—
No brilliant, enduring flame
Nor heat of renown they claim;
Theirs only the modest part
To warm for awhile the heart.

Pictures in the fire suggest memories of sunshine and shadows, flowers and snows, fancies of childhood and reveries of age, irrespective of times and seasons,—even as fagots, gathered from different brush, are imbued with sap from trees of differing nature; hence the variety of sentiment offered in this bundle of verse.



CONTENTS

	PAGE
Foreword	3
Fireside Visions	11
The Gleam	12
Petition	12
Life's Lyric	13
The Silent Call	14
Child of the Covenant	14
Assurement	15
Life's Contrasts	16
Trust	16
The Carol of Trust	17
The Psalmody of Cheer	18
Yet	19
Chain Reverie	19
Twilight	20
Happiness	21
A Song of Degrees	22
The Vast Profound	23
Baby	23
The Slumber Sprite	24
Companioned	25
Thoughts	26
Day Dreams	26
The Future	27
The Avowal	27
Love's Cameo	28
Personality	29
My Sky	29

	PAGE
Their World	30
In Love's Domain	30
Insight	31
The Triad	31
Law and Love	32
Destination	32
Influence	33
Ought	34
Why Not I?	35
Over Us	35
A Challenge	36
Veiled	36
Birthday Anniversary	37
Fault	37
The Longtime Ago	38
Within	38
Sings the Rain	39
Joy-Time	39
A Roundel	40
Lily-of-the-Valley	40
Behold	41
Beyond Words	42
Sundered	42
The Glory of the Rose	43
You	43
June	44
Query	45
Forget-Me-Not	45
A Conceit	46
Autumn	46
A Lesson Lilt	47

	PAGE
Time's Advance	48
Fagots	49
The Ingle	50
Snow-Flakes	51
Winter Fairies	52
Providence	52
The Ever Presence	53
Our Sufficiency	54
With the Years	54
Loss	55
Solace	56
Easter Sonnet	56
After Calvary—Victory	57
The Sudden Storm	58
Pride	59
Camouflage	59
The Honor Call	60
Immortalized	61
The Master Poet's Pen	62
Aspiration	62
The Stars and Stripes	63
Co-operation	64
Triplet	64



FAGOTS



FIRESIDE VISIONS

If found thy comrade dreams are fair are sweet,
Tho' vagrom guests, accord them welcome meet
As envoys bearing thee a largess good
Of musings fain to hold the idle hour;
Invite the spell of their beguiling power,
And bid thy meditation share their mood.

The lure of pleasing fancies they unfold,
The wand by which transform they dross to gold,
The art they boast to charm away despair,
Be passports these chance visitants present
Which speak them no intruders to resent,
Of whom it were the wiser to beware!

Companioneed thus, thy leisure feels no need,
There follows truce to worldly grind and greed
And life is over-arched with rainbow hues;
Like angels' visits which in silence bless,
These fleeting seasons they thy hearth possess;
Then act the host! their gifts do not refuse.

THE GLEAM

After it, follow it, follow the Gleam.—TENNYSON

The Gleam, or either faint or clear it be,
That points the path to dimmer visioned height,
Leads on and on, once we, intent to see,
Discern and follow its benignant light.

Its beacon call to near then farther goal,
The meed of promised gain along its way,
Invite the unpeased, aspiring soul
To trust and heed the guidings of its ray.

Then after it! pursue where it insists,
The Gleam that fares from better unto best;
That shines to dissipate life's clouding mists;
That glorifies the milestones by its quest.

PETITION

Set mine heart to seek the highway,
Set up waymarks for my feet,
Lest I stumble, lest I falter,
Lest I fail Thy tests to meet.

LIFE'S LYRIC

The faith that clings and sings,
That wafts the soul on wings
 The heights along,—
This is the faith for thee, for me,
This is the trust, so fine, so free,
 That makes life strong.

The hope that strives and thrives
Where else were barren lives,
 Despair, or fears,—
This is the hope for thee, for me,
This is the cheer, so fair so free,
 That suns the years.

The love that bears and shares,
That never service spares
 In walk below,
This is the love for thee, for me,
This is the bond, so firm, so free,
 That hearts may know.

THE SILENT CALL

As the eventide welcomes the glory
Of the heavens with star-worlds ashine,
As the mid-night makes call to the morning,
So the human would hail the divine.

As the hart for the water brooks panteth,
As the honey bee haunteth the flower,
So the soul hath its thirst and its yearning
For the Spirit's infilling of power.

CHILD OF THE COVENANT

O child of my grace, I am with thee, believe,
Nor ever will leave thee;
I watch thee, and love thy love to receive;
It grieves me to grieve thee;
I care for thy care; I joy in thy joy,
And ask for thy task, life's highest employ.
My will be thy will,
My fulness, thy fill.

ASSUREMENT

*At evening time it shall be light.—ZECH. 14:7.
There shall be no night there.—REV. 21:25*

When over me darkness foldeth
Some fabric despair hath spun,
Or happen my evening holdeth
No hope of the morrow's sun,—
Oh Lord in thy heaven heeding,
Oh Christ in thy love, I pray,
Vouchsafe for my spirit's leading
A glimpse of Eternal Day.

Ah then, though that hour of gloaming
Deny me its break of morn—
Assured of the cloudless doming
Where death unto Life is born,
I'll know in thy presence waking
Thy likeness henceforth to share,
All shadows of earth forsaking,
No night shall await me there.

LIFE'S CONTRASTS

Nor world's caress, nor man's distress
Is his to stay;
An unhazed blue, or sombre hue
May sky display,—
Then ebon night, or starry light,
At shut of day.
Its smiles, its frowns, its "ups and downs,".
Or work, or play;
Both joys and cares, here helps, there snares,
Fair blooms, decay;
Now hopes, now fears, now songs, now tears,
Make grave or gay.
Though weal, or woe, its hours bestow
Yet souls can pray,—
"When ends earth's strife, from death to life
Lead, Lord, the way."

TRUST

So superfine,— so rich a thing is trust,
It flecks with gold the dunes and common dust.

THE CAROL OF TRUST

Bird of passage, here sojourning
From thy haunts of Far-away,
Welcome be thy glad returning,
Hail to thine inspiring lay:
Poised on swaying branch for perch,
Fearing not its fitful lurch—
Lo, a message thou dost bear,
Orator of sky and air!

Lyrist, born to free communion
Where celestial space and speech,
Heaven's thought and nature's instinct
Form the creed thy carols teach:
Here and yonder on the wing,
Brave to soar and blithe to sing,—
Thou art pledged the Father's care
Every-whither, every where.

Plumaged pilgrim, cheery ever
Whether flitting or a-nest,
What thy shelter, what the weather,
Thou dost witness, Trust is best.
He who notes the sparrow's fall,
Of His creatures, great and small,
Claimeth confidence and praise—
As so simply speak thy days!

THE PSALMODY OF CHEER

Sing who will in joy and pleasure,
Let me sing in pain;
Praise who will the stars and sunshine,
Let me praise the rain.

Clouds may bear a better blessing
Than the sapphire day;
Easy runs the chant of gladness
Where the smiling way!

Let me hymn of hope and courage
When there wells the tear,
When some burdened soul is needing
Psalmody of cheer.

YET

Tho' sullen clouds encircle low,
Yet, unforlorn, I fear no woe:
The way tho' lone, the day tho' long,
Mine inner life hath yet its song.

Upon the hearth but embers show
Where leapt the flame's alluring glow,
Yet naught of gloom to me they bring—
So bright the past of which they sing.

CHAIN REVERIE

Out of the silence come voices,
Voices tenderly low;
Low as the murmur of sea shells,
Shells that tide-secrets know;
Knew as the soul kens its cloister—
Cloister brightened by song,
Song that accompanies visions,
Visions lost in the throng.

TWILIGHT

Across the narrows filmed by ebbing light,
A drawbridge dusken hands have outward swung
Now spans the gloaming-tide twixt day and night.
Enchanted seem its glimmering path and arch,
All softly lit by waning lanterns hung
On either side where moments line in march.

Soon memory's drifting gondolas draw near,
And gondoliers give seranade of song
That stirs the heart and charms the inner ear;
We breathe afresh the scent of cherished rose
That pleasured us so dearly and so long,
And falls upon the soul a sweet repose.

Becomes so hushed the languid, amorous air,
We scarcely sense the mundane tire and stress
Of busy hours that plied their trade of care,
Nor deem it strange that twilight weaves a spell
For trysting vows, and innocent caress,
And secret cravings not for us to tell!

HAPPINESS

Too taut the tension under test supreme,
A heartstring snapped ; no longer might I play
The chords of joy's content ; yet when came dream
Its place to fill, I went each likely way
In quest of substitute by world supplied ;
But found not one of all the varied marts,
Not one of all the pleasure-counters tried,
Could furnish what again would sound those parts.

To self-forgetting service later led,
Unsought was met the want desired so long ;
Now this,— a golden string in other's stead—
Gave richer, fuller tone to purer song,
And well I knew must hold for me far more
Than any melody had meant before.

A SONG OF DEGREES

To be alive, with mind alert,
With soul a-stir
Amid the moil, and medley din
Of traffic's whir;
To grow in health and hardihood—
Ah, that is good.

To feel the press, to know the thrill
Of inner urge
That bears the tides of life along
In forward surge,
And steers or speeds some mate ashore,—
Is better, more.

To sympathize with all distress,
To grieve for wrong;
Reverse some strain of discontent
To joyous song;
The heart of things, a goal, a quest,—
That, that is best.

THE VAST PROFOUND

For all your surge, loud dash and thundery tone,
You hold deep silences beneath your moan,
You bosom countless secrets long your own
And age-old mysteries to man unknown.

Although your speech of variant mood and strain
Seem never wholly hushed, nor else than plain,
Yet who can understand your voice of pain—
So true your tides, so vast your proud domain.

BABY

Wee little monarch,
Crowned from above,
Ruling already
Thy kingdom of love,—

New little stranger,
Helpless but here,
Eager our welcome
Dependent most dear!

THE SLUMBER SPRITE

Moving to music of lullaby song,
Airily, fairly tripping along,
Dream-realm's enchantress, in raiment of white,
Cometh to wish thee and kiss thee good-night.
List to her footfall,—belike she'll appear
Bearing the blessing of sleep for thy cheer.

"Over the window of each open eye,
Cover its curtaining lid," she will cry;
"Fear not the shadows that creep on thy sight,
Bending to guard thee are angels of light."
Closer approacheth her small sandaled feet,—
Bright Eyes, thy winkers are almost asleep!

Hush-a-by hour is now chiming for thee,—
That is the reason soft steppings there be,
That is the reason a voice sweetly low
Lures thee to Napland where babies must go.
Calm little captive! thy sorcerous guest
Crowns thee with garland of sleep for thy rest.

COMPANIONED

Congenial guests,
Improving zest;
Fond quests.
A moonlight view,
Old whisperings new—
Just two!

The leisure dream,
The fish-line's gleam,
By stream;
A travel-day,
Fresh smell of hay;
At play.

Now grate-fire's snap;
Now child in lap
For nap;
Or cosy nook
Of comrade look,
And book.

Piano keys,
An hour of ease
To please;
From people free,
A cup of tea
With me.

THOUGHTS

Our thoughts are angels good or bad
That bid for our control;
We open wide to them the doors
Of mind and heart and soul,
Accept the proffered hoard they bring
Perchance of wealth or dole,
That makes our lives well worth the while,
Or wanting, as a whole;
That even may misguide our feet
To alien paths, or goal.
Our thoughts are angels good or bad,
To which our years pay toll.

DAY DREAMS

The castles that we build in sunny Spain—
Esteem them, shall we, idle dreams and vain,
If be they brighten by a roseate touch
Our sombre stretch of toil, our daily stress?
If, leisure moments visionary bless
That else were dull, or burdened evermuch?

Fair fancies, thus a stimulus to hope,
May mitigate the odds with which we cope
In meeting stern realities and strife;
A respite from the sordid cares that play
Their commonplace refrain from day to day,
May tune the mind to more melodious life.

THE FUTURE

I love to imagine the world holds a time
When I shall attain to the grace
Of every ideal that should become real
To one of a privileged race;
I love to believe it will bring me the day
When all of my duty-work planned
Accomplished will be, and I, at last, free
To follow the choice of my hand!

THE AVOWAL

Heart of my heart, awake!
Hark to the plea I make
To win thine ear, O thou most dear.

Soul of my soul, rejoice!
Heed the impassioned voice
Of calling love, all else above.

Life of my life, reply;
Pledge me but lip and eye—
Thy look, thy kiss shall be my bliss.

Love of my love, O sweet,
Now is my life complete;
My heart, my soul, are thine in whole.

LOVE'S CAMEO

As clearly cut and purely white
As ever gem that hails the light:

The carved features, sweet, refined,
Reflecting thoughts unselfish, kind;

The character expressed in face
Denoting traits of force and grace,

With spirit limned in bas relief
As one attuned to joy and grief.

Whose symmetry of mold and line
Portrays the touch of Hand divine;

Whose charm and worth grow never less
As years advance, as rivals press.

A cameo doth love behold
That hath for setting, deeds of gold;

Whose image on my heart I wear,—
It pins my faith to fabric fair;

It helps me see in human lives
Adorn which change and loss survives.

PERSONALITY

Bribe nor brawn can buy it,
Brain may not defy it,—
 Permanent its sway;
Friend may not supply it,
Foe may not deny it
 Royal right-of-way.

'Tis beyond the taking—
'Tis of life's own making,
 Always, only, ours;
Forceful past our rating,
Past our thought's forsaking,
 Greatest of our powers.

MY SKY

I sang me of love at the gloaming,
 Of love that would never grow old;
Of love that by loving increaseth,
 Of love that can never be told.
I sang me of love at the dawning,—
 And the day was a shimmer of gold.

THEIR WORLD

“The world is wide, and you, my bride,
Have all that world for me impearled,—
And worlds on worlds in fair expense
Are lit for me by your bright glance.”

“The world is small—you are its all
For me,” she cried, this joyous bride,—
“And nothing in it matters much
That hints not of your voice or touch!”

IN LOVE'S DOMAIN

There lies no limit north or south,
No boundary east or west,
In travel of the thought to reach
The loved one loved the best;
There is no language may not voice
The heart's impassioned speech,
Nor erudition in its school
But love to love can teach.

INSIGHT

We never spoke of love, dear one,
As lovers love to do,
And yet I knew you knew my heart
Throbbed quickest but for you.

We never said the many things
That lovers love to say,
But well you knew I knew the part
And loved you love's own way.

THE TRIAD

A dear little ditty I send thee
Of only a triad of words,
But listen the while that I tell thee
It's sung by the rapturous birds;
'Tis breathed by the deep-blushing roses,
That nestle so close to thy breast,
And whispered by wooing breezes
Caressing thy face as their quest;
'Tis voiced by the musical waters
That fare to the amorous sea,
As surely and sweetly and simply
As now its confession from me:—
"I love thee,—I love thee."

A dear little ditty I send thee,
That's sung by the rapturous birds;
And all that I ask is thy answer
Shall bring me its triad of words!

LAW AND LOVE

Both hailed from court above,
And each to each made bow.

Said Law to Love:—

I greater am than thou,
I may thy very oracles defy!

Love gave reply:—

I am a law unto myself;
I am a freakish little elf,
As old as thou but not so cold,
Nor yet as vain in point of brain;
I rule with tender force, with soft-gloved hand;
Thy grip of rigor sterner makes command,—
A power I neither envy nor resent.
The world hath need of me as needs it thee;
I hold its heart and am content.

DESTINATION

The serving rivers seek the glorious sea;
Where head your currents flowing strong and free?

INFLUENCE

Heard you never voice of pebble
As it sang amid the stream
Where its circles ever widened,
Ever distanced in their gleam:—
“Watch the wavelets spreading onward,
See effects I can produce;
Plunge ahead into the current,
Every effort is of use!”

Heard you never voice of nature
Sing in accents clear and true,—
“There is nothing lost nor fruitless,
All is vital that I do;
What may seem to fail and perish
Shall survive to serve its end;
Never act of high endeavor
But the heaven’s will befriend.”

“Should the faithful be discouraged?”
Hear the harvest fields inquire.
“Though unseen the promised reaping
Though delayed the heart’s desire?”
You are weeping! Oh, I fear me
You have dared some evil deed,—
For there’s sorrow comes from sowing
If you plant unrighteous seed.

OUGHT

A stern, unyielding word, dogmatic, dread?
Not always:—sweet reminder it may shed
Of wisdom's course, of undeveloped good,
Of timely call to hale hardihood.

Behind it heaven presses her kind law;
Within it, places visions clear of flaw;
Beneath it lo! temptations lose in power;
Above it, fragrant ends and meanings flower.

Poetic nor esthetic in its mold,
But yet in ethic spirit, purest gold,—
Or whether as a spur or as a stay,
It mirrors duty; marks the turn of way.

WHY NOT I?

The teakettle sings, tho' accorded no beauty
Except that it meets its monotonous duty
In just the right way;
Why not I?
A narrow, unpropheting sphere, do you say?
Prithee, why?
Fidelity, Service,— to these a large place
Eternity gives in her plan and her space;
To do what the task with a song of good grace,
Ennobles the day.
The teakettle joys in its work, why not I?

OVER US

Each dawn, behold the pilot sun
 To voyage day;
In life's recurrent round and run
 God guides the way.
At night, star-sentinels illume
 The sunless sky;
His angels light our even-gloom,
 Nor sleeps His eye.

A CHALLENGE

The hill acclaimed to valley,—
“I farther see than you;
I boast a broader vision,
Less circumscribed, more true.”

The valley ventured protest,—
“My view less wide, less far?
But looking up the higher,
I scan where heavens are.”

The sky observed serenely
To hill and vale below,—
“You both can glimpse how little
Of vast survey I know!”

VEILED

Though the sky be o'ercast,
And dusken the night,
Nor the sun nor the stars
Are any less bright
Where they shine, for the while,
Quite hid from our sight.

BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY

*The candles are too many, now, to count,
And yet, I beg you, blow not any out.*

Another milestone reached!
Shorter lies the road beyond;
Nearer looms the destination toward which
The years of life determinately move;
'Tis well.
The past recedes;
The present pauses scarcely to take breath;
The future, lighted by its star of hope,
More clearly beckons toward the final goal.
Forward, dowered soul!
Press onward unafraid, without demur,—
As heir of promise, gladly hastening on
To claim the fair estate that yonder waits.

FAULT

Thou ne'er didst err—is that thy tale?
Nor wrong thy soul, nor ever fail?
Belike, then, thou dost witless sin
By pride of purity within!

THE LONGTIME AGO

"Is it following memory's trail leading low
Into the past of your child-sheltered years,
That you speak with a sigh of the longtime ago?"
"No, dear, no."

"Is it treading again in the cypress-lined lane—
Where your farewell doomed a sweetheart to tears,
That you utter the phrase with an echo of pain?"

"No, love, no;

It's the halcyon days when my trust was so strong
Life brought no burdens of doubts or of fears;
When all ills had a cure, and all sorrows a song,
Long ago!"

WITHIN

There dwells a self within myself
That strives to better be;
Beyond the thoughts my pen can frame
Are thoughts I yearn to free;
There beats a heart within my heart
That loves the purest things;
There breathes a soul within my soul
Where voice of angel sings.

SINGS THE RAIN

The gentle pitter-patter splash of rain
In rhythmic monologue against the pane;
Its metric beat upon the roof and leaves,
Its music-making run along the eaves;
The riant choral of its crystal pour,
Its drip and drop antiphony of score;
Its chant that boon to things a-thirst declares,
The lulling note its liquid cadence bears;
Or, chance the minor key its tone express
When wayward winds its path unwelcome press,—
Each runic mood imparts a lyric strain
To voicings of its greeting and refrain,
And, unto ear attuned, assurance brings
That rain which warns and glads the verdure, sings!

JOY-TIME

Daffodil, daffodil,
Laugh if you will;
Now is the Spring-song,
Joy's at its fill!

A ROUNDEL

We cannot tell how lilies grow—
The snowy lilies loved so well;
From blackest soil why white they show,
We cannot tell:

Although where Christ did perfect dwell
And argent lilies were a-blow,
We wonder not so pure each bell;

Nor that their stainless blooms bestow
Such fragrance all their florent spell,
But whither may their incense go
We cannot tell.

LILY-OF-THE-VALLEY

I'm the lily-of-the-valley,
And I sing a valley song:—
I do not need the sunshine
To keep me sweet and strong,
Nor depend on care and coaxing,
Every year to blossom long.

BEHOLD

Behold the rose beside the thorn,
With fear nor care it threatens there,
But looks to its protection share;
Each velvet fold of whose adorn
A perfume wafts that mate forlorn.

Behold the honeysuckle flower:—
It opens up its golden cup
The dew to sip; for bee to sup;
And lifts alike to sun and shower
A friendly front to claim its dower.

Behold the odored violet,
Which holds its place with lowly grace—
Although of royal-purpled race—
Which by its modest sweetness, yet
Makes all around, its pride forget.

Behold the sunflower—what its ways,
How high it grows, how hale it glows;
The orb of day its habit knows:
Discerns its life his lead obeys,
Observes its face reflects his rays.

Behold the lily of the field,—
Its fine array, its envied away,
Which toils nor spins to seek display,
Yet Solomon no power could wield
To match the glory it revealed.

Behold the early blooms of spring:—

So brave their gleam, so glad they seem
To brighten meadow, woods, and stream,
In sweet refrain their muses sing,
“A smile awaits each cheering thing.”

BEYOND WORDS

Dear, my own, if I could I tell thee
All thou art to me,
Thou wouldest rank with loves the lesser
Than I reckon thee.

Words the best can not suffice me—
What their tender tone;
By that lack, my heart confesseth
Kept for thee its throne.

SUNDERED

She held the rose I'd given her
With monment's look of cold disdain;
While I forgave the passing pain
That she ignored its fragrant heart,
For this I've never shriven her,—
Its petals, then, she tore apart;
Her penitence must plead in vain,
No power can put them back again!

THE GLORY OF THE ROSE

O rose in the weight of thy beauty
Bending fond glances to greet—
Far brighter is earth for thy blessing,
Sweeter is life for thy sweet.

'Tis true over-brief seems thy lasting,
Still, but the transient while,
Again in thy splendor appearing,
Breaks now the world into smile.

We welcome thy bloom and thy fragrance—
Lavish in service of cheer—
And see in thy blossom's unfolding
Glory revealed to us here.

YOU

Roses, love, the moonlight's call,—
Yet you never came.
Rue for me, and midnight's pall,—
Roses not the same!

JUNE

O, ardent month of roses,
Fair fields and flaunting posies
And vivid overhue—
The birds, how glad they greet thee,
How grasses smile to meet thee,
Which grace the verdant view!

As wake of dawn discloses
Thy leafage, sward, and roses
Begemmed with sparkling dew—
Thy balmy breezes wing us,
And perfumed blossoms bring us
What praise of thee anew!

Now eye of day repose
Upon thy reigning roses
And brightly gives them gaze;
While over mead and river
The sunbeams break aquiver
Through filmy veil of haze.

Thy tender touches thrill us;
Unstinted blessings fill us
With sense of good untold;—
Thy morn, mid-day, and evening,
In turn, some boon receiving
To band thy hours with gold.

Thy fragrant breath and fairness,
Invite the cold and careless
To share thy charm and cheer:—
Full strange did all not love thee,
And count no month above thee
Throughout the changing year!

QUERY

Why do I prize it so,
Why do I keep it thus near—
This jar of unsingular mold?

Ah, but its hidings hold
Ashes of roses, my dear,
Of roses the rarest that grow!

FORGET-ME-NOT

A flowerét tiny—Do not pass me by,
See how my vesture vies with blue of sky;
Because so tiny, I might be forgot
But for my pleading name, For-get-mé-not.
A floweret tiny, I so oft abide
Where weeds and marshes my ambitions chide
Without the proffer of my valued sweet
The world more seldom might my name repeat!

A CONCEIT

The leaves assembled, great and small,
To hold their annual festive ball
Before the chilling snows should fall.

They all were gorgeous as you please,
And danced to pipe of merry breeze,
Well chaperoned by parent trees.

But afterward, the gossips say,
Each hied to bed for lengthy stay—
So wilted, so tired out were they.

AUTUMN

The roar of wind like surge of heavy seas,
A sighing tone, a rustle in the trees;
A glimpse of nature's mellow charm and glow
Amid the ruddy colors frosts bestow;
The sight of waving grain, of garnered sheaves;
A shower of red and golden russet leaves
That flutter, chase, or stray as breezes bid;
A haze that hints of splendors partly hid.

Now touch of Indian Summer's gracious sway,
Now witchery of early snow's display;
Ingathered fruits of husbandry and care;
A crisply chill, invigorating air;
The time of fagot fires, of harvest moon,
With scenes familiar as the rose of June.
A season that earth's gratitude must praise
For countless benefits and regal days.

A LESSON LILT

Through rain unspent and chill,
Through wind uncalmed and shrill,
Attend, my soul, to robin's dauntless trill
That saith, on branch a-swing:—
“Cling on, still cling and cling!”

The day hath veiled her face,
The dark draws on apace,
Respond, my soul, to jubilance of grace
The nightingale doth bring:—
“Sing on, yet sing and sing!”

The summer-tide hath flown,
The autumn, sterner grown;
Awake, my soul now birds of passage own
The time is come to sing:—
“Wing on, just wing and wing!”

Ah! denizens of th' air,
Or frowning skies, or fair,
This roundelay my listening soul ye bear:—
“Hold on, look up, take wing,
And heaven will help thee sing!”

TIME'S ADVANCE

The autumn air, how clear!
Away, then fear!
The year but nears its goal,
As doth the soul.

When fall and fade the leaves,
Lo, golden sheaves
The splendid tribute bring
That harvests sing.

Lament not, nor despair
When youth so fair
To ripened age gives place:—
Its glory face:

For there is beauty still,
Look where you will,—
Though morn and noon be past
And day wanes fast.

So holds life's sunset tint
No color stint;
It would the glowing West
Were loved the best.

FAGOTS

From out the crackling blaze a hearth-fay came,
And spake to dreamer musing near the flame:—
“Though seems this of itself to burn, 'tis clear
Its start and feeding drew on fuel here;
To light and keep aglow within the heart
The alter-fires that kindle love and cheer,
Contribute service-fagots as thy part.”

Then woodland fairy bade the fagots sing:—
“Refuse not smallest offerings to bring;
Despise not, mighty oak, thy twigs to share,
Nor sapling, spurn thy branchlets thus to spare,
For we together number large, and gain—
By use that calls for little care—
An end we might not each alone attain.”

THE INGLE

*"Sit thee by the ingle, when
The sear fagot blazes bright."*—KEATS.

I went on a happy adventure,
Ensconsed in a wonderful book;
I travelled the world almost over
Without ever leaving my nook.

I revelled in scenes most romantic,
My heart rode the sea's highest crest--
With never an ocean-wave sighted
Yet many a port for my quest.

In company novel and famous
I journeyed the weariless while,
Returning refreshed from that voyage,
Inspired by its thrilling beguile.

I thought of the marvelous places
Attained without peril or slip,
And gratefully blessed the bright fagots
That led to my taking the trip!

SNOW-FLAKES

Welcome awaiteth you, wingers of snow,
Lighting now hither, now yonder a-whirl,
Decking gray nature with ermine and pearl,—
Scattering brightness wherever ye go!

Silently, softly yet fleetly ye file,—
Stellular flakes of a comrade intent,
Leaguing the fairest scenes to present,
Merging in might as ye gather the while.

Graciously wending from region above,
Over uncomeliness spreading thy sheen,—
Seem ye like spirit-evangels that screen
Human defects with the mantle of love.

Greeted with zest where your myraids show,
Guests at a season when aspect were drear
Save for your coming and but for your cheer,—
All of us welcome you, wingers of snow!

WINTER FAIRIES

Fresh from native sky-haunt,
Speeding gently down,
Come the fairy snow-flakes
Each in fleecy gown.

Witching trains attend them
Whither they alight,
Making all about them
Change to lustrous white.

How they smile and glisten
Where at rest they cleave!
At the sun-god's calling,
Take they tearful leave.

PROVIDENCE

"For He saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth."

The seasons He hath planned
To serve our weal; His will;
My times are in His Hand
His purpose to fulfill.

THE EVER PRESENCE

The darkness boasts His Vigil,
 Behind the cloud, His light;
The shower reveals His rainbow,
 The storm proclaims His might;
The “angel of His presence”
 Consoles the bed of pain,
And sorrow chants its morrow
 Of kindly purposed gain.

The heavens declare His glory,
 The planets own His sway;
The seedtime, soil and harvest
 His changless laws obey;
He rules the tides of ocean,
 The thunders voice His will,
And winds and waves defiant,
 Must heed His “Peace, be still.”

The sparrow claims His watch-care,
 The healing herb, His thought;
His love attends each heart-cry
 What help or solace sought;
The grave reflects His radiance,
 And mercies ever new,
Descend like silent sunshine,
 Or fall of gracious dew.

OUR SUFFICIENCY

O Son of man, supreme to feel
Our human call and needs,
No sorrow but thy hand may heal,
No prayer thine ear unheeds.

O Son of God, so rich in grace,
The life, the truth, the way,
Thou ruler over time and space
Our stronghold art and stay.

Compassionate beyond compare,
Whose word is law's decree—
We seek thy keeping, guiding care,
O Christ of Galilee.

WITH THE YEARS

A coronal of blessing pearl thy brow,
Each pearl a memory of lustrous worth,—
The gift of grateful years that here and now
Acknowledge royal favors through thy birth.

LOSS

"I sleep, but my heart waketh."

Sorely was I bereaved:
A spirit rare,
A comrade sad to spare
Was she for whom I grieved,—
A faithful, helpful friend
Inspiring to the end;

But memories of her set my soul a-thrill,
And her sweet influence surrounds me still.

Later was I bereft:
By some strange fate
A childhood mate
And intimate of many after years,
That friendship left.
No tone nor touch of hate
Estranged our lives, yet is there call for tears
No halo her remembered name endears!

SOLACE

The hours of my day can be lonely and long
However well filled they may be;
But, lo! in the night-time my solace and song,
Since dreams then return thee to me.

EASTER SONNET

When Easter morn its pristine radiance shed
And waiting hearts, cast down with fearsome grief,
Beheld the tomb effulgent past belief;
When angel guard the joyant sureness spread
That Christ bemourned was risen from the dead,—
Ah, then what infinite, supreme relief
Came flooding in to dissipate the brief,
Despotic sorrow Calvary had bred!

No other day that smiled on any year
So wondrous spake within its lease of time;
Such token gave that heaven's brighter sphere,
In touch with earth can make its toll sublime;
Nor peals from any belfry sweeter cheer
Than Easter bells in message clearly chime.

AFTER CALVARY—VICTORY

So vast the Golgothas of war have grown,
Its Calvaries so smite the anguished sense,
We need that gospels clear, assuaging tone—
That vital promise of high recompense—
Which Easter daybreak gave in triumph cry:
After Calvary—victory!

In wake of edict that surprised the world,
Though ghastly tragedies and fates extreme
Their awful weight on savior-nations hurled,
These held the holier cause of man supreme;
Although grim might the right may crucify—
After Calvary—victory.

By test a-face the dread despotic cross,
By cruel thorn and nail thrusts borne to-day,—
Not thus a righteous conflict suffers loss;
Nay, though a darkened sun lend brief dismay,
The paean of redemption cannot die,—
After Calvary—victory!

THE SUDDEN STORM

There loomed a fleet in the over blue,—
A series of clouds sailing by—
Each pennant rimmed with a silver hue
Reflecting the smile of the sky.
How stately, how unperturbed their run,
As, cresting the billows of light,
These liners bore not a single gun
Nor cannon to waken affright.

An ominous cloud-crew hailed their path,
Enshrouding these vessels in smoke ;
The placid blue were a look of wrath
When thunder's artillery spoke :
A flash ! a volley ! a bolt ; a crash !
The fleet so defenseless went down.
"Alas ! alas !", moaned the rain, "how rash
To take no precautions,—and drown !"

PRIDE

A tyrant prisoner of war
I took with my degree,
(Obtained by fight with circumstance),
At victory's decree.
This alien captive that I kept
Within my brainiest cell,
Evoked more liberal care from me
Than modesty may tell;
And when, at last, this same intern
Stern judgment bade me free—
That cherished tyrant, now I found,
Had turned the key on me!

CAMOUFLAGE

To win, perchance, a passing fame
From but a certain few,
I dipped in classic lore a bit,
And learned a myth or two;
I quoted lines from Attic bards
Of whom they little knew.

And when the scheme successful seemed,
Should any present pry
Beyond my ken and question me,
I simply made reply:
“I’ll not attempt to answer give—
You know as well as I.”

THE HONOR CALL

As belfry bells kept calling
To worship's prayer and song,
I saw the number kneeling,
I heard them hymn,—Be strong.

When rang the bell of freedom
The call our country gave,
In bidding to the colors
I heard it peal,—Be brave.

At last, alone with conscience,
That "still, small voice" I knew,
With kind but grave insistence
To honor called,—Be true.

IMMORTALIZED

The wreath immortal wears a wondrous guise,
And rarely ranks as such one should disdain;
"Imperishable name!" ambition cries,
"That were a boon most worth the while to gain."
But Pilate's name is linked where Christ's is known,
And Nero's, lives with tale of burning Rome,
Some Cain or Judas, too, hath history shown
Since peopled earth beheld its azured dome.
The world may crown with laurel well and right,
Remains unmatched that storied place and fame
Which alabaster box and widow's mite,
Throughout all time, above, below, can claim.

The nations,—let them memory's tribute pay,
And keep alive illustrious names they boast;
Let Christendom recount and own the sway
Of heroes who have lighted far her coast,—
There still may be a glory here unwon
Which earth's unhonored worthies yet may win—
The crown immortal, with the laud: Well done,
Thou good and faithful servant, enter in.

THE MASTER POET'S PEN

Where wrought, or how, the golden pen
That writ thy perfect verse,—
Enduring, vivid, rich in thought
While yet unforced and terse?

Wherein doth lie its magic power?
The humbler bards would know;
Seems charmed its every trick and word
To set thy page aglow!

So smoothly, simply run its lines
In strong, in fine appeal,
Is caught no sound of pen at all
Although its art we feel.

It is a gift—that master pen—
Which hand of genius guides;
It cannot borrowed be, nor earned
Except where skill presides.

ASPIRATION

I wish I could with eloquence
Indite my song
Supply it worth and melody
To linger long.
In this, at least, I may succeed
Without dissent,—
To key it to the harmony
Of high intent.

THE STARS AND STRIPES

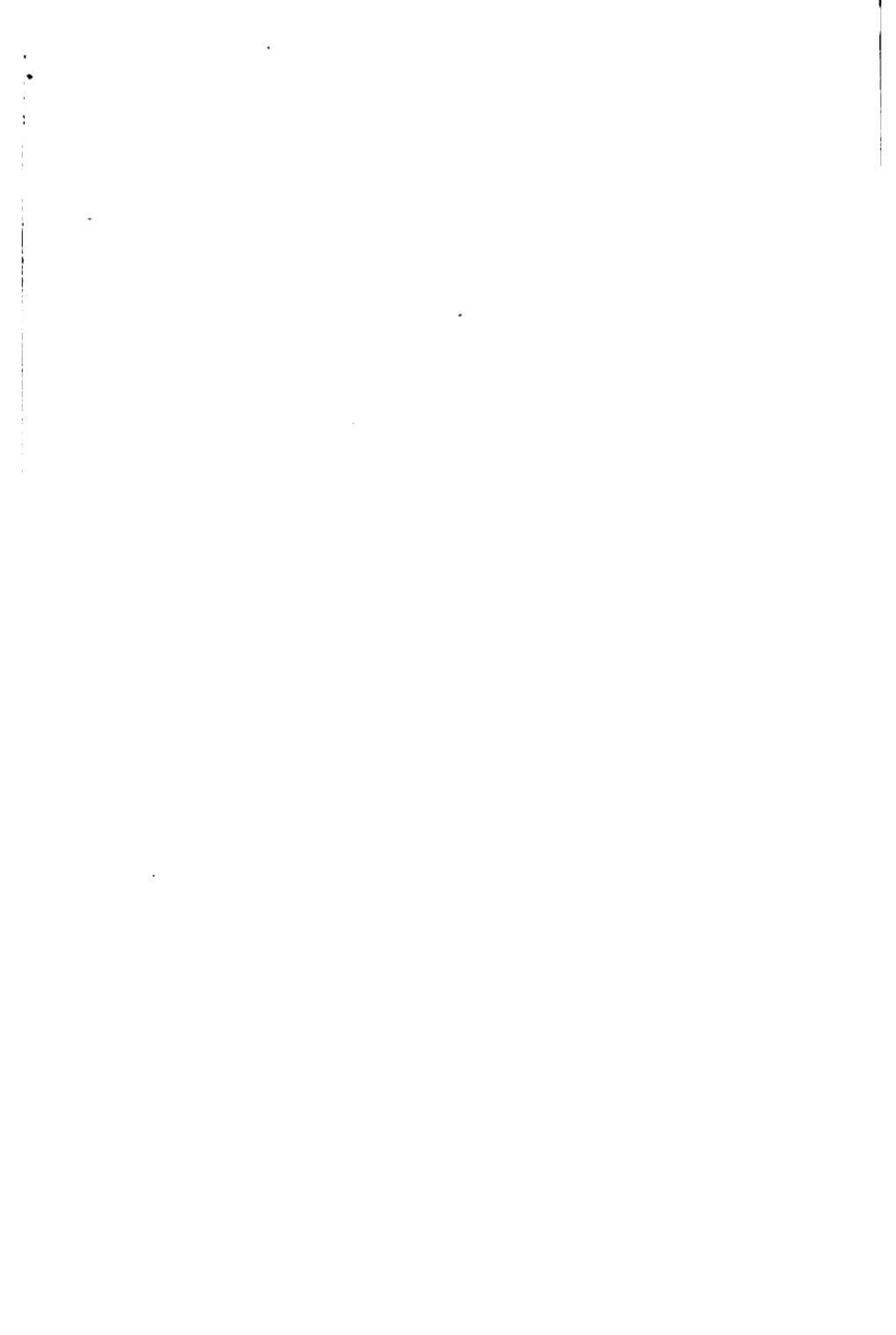
To mine eyes the most beautiful banner
Unfurled on the land or the sea,
Is the tri-colored flag of my country—
The home of the brave and the free.
Ah its fairness, with folds all unsullied
By tyrannous conquest or spoil,
Whose Colonial stripes cry devotion
To Liberty's sonship and soil;
While its patron-states, proudly united
In star-studded setting of blue,
Bid it challenge the cause of injustice
And champion that which is true.
As the hearts' bleeding dye of its loyals
Is fadelessly stamped on its float,
So its pearly white streamers betoken
The pureness it aims to promote.
Best belov'd among National ensigns
To those who its standards uphold,
May the heavenly stars in their courses
Help fight where its signals unfold.

CO-OPERATION

Not merely the soldiers and sailors,
Not only the leaders of men,
Are serving the hour in struggle
To drive the dread Hun to his den.—
But women, wide-organized masses,
The poor and the millionaire classes,
The patriotic needle and pen.

TRIOLET

How lightly lie those embers white
Serenely marred in calm repose;
But lately shed by fagots bright—
How lightly lie those embers white;
As soft and silent as the night
Whose moon her palest crescent shows,
How lightly lie those embers white
Serenely massed in calm repose.





125

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